

Message Text

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PAGE 01 USUN N 03274 190526Z

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INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USUN 3274

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UN, CY, XF

SUBJ: ALLOCATION AND PRIORITY OF PALESTINE AND CYPRUS ITEMS

REF: STATE 205187

1. ALLOCATION OF PALESTINE ITEM.

AS DEPT AWARE THROUGH TELECONS, AMB BENNETT ASKED SYG TO TRY TO PERSUADE GA PRESIDENT BOUTEFLIKA AND KEY ARAB DELS TO REQUEST ALLOCATION OF PALESTINE ITEM TO COMMITTEE RATHER THAN PLENARY. PRINCIPAL GROUNDS WERE A) DAMAGING PRECEDENT THAT WOULD BE SET IF NON-MEMBER STATE WERE ALLOWED FOR FIRST TIME TO ADDRESS PLENARY - ENCOURAGING ALL NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENT REPS TO DO THE SAME, AND B) DAMAGING EFFECT OF SHOWCASE

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PAGE 02 USUN N 03274 190526Z

DEBATE IN PLENARY ON SECRETARY'S EFFORTS TO WORK OUT PALESTINIAN

REPRESENTATION QUESTION THROUGH QUIET DIPLOMACY. WALDHEIH SAID HE APPRECIATED IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING SECRETARY'S EFFORTS, AND AGREED TO DO HIS BEST TO KEEP PALESTINE DEBATE OUT OF PLENARY.

2. PRIORITY OF PALESTINE ITEM.

QUESTION OF PRIORITY IS VERY UNLIKELY TO COME UP IN GENERAL COMMITTEE. WE HAVE HAD DIFFERENT OPINIONS FROM DIFFERENT ARAB DELS ON TIMING OF PALESTINE ITEM, BUT MOST AUTHORITATIVE IS PROBABLY THAT OF PLO NEW YORK REP SAADAT HASAN. HASAN TOLD US ARABS DID NOT FEEL STRONGLY THAT PALESTINE QUESTION HAD TO BE FIRST ITEM DEBATED AFTER GENERAL DEBATE. AT SAME TIME, THEY DID NOT WANT IT TO RUN CONCURRENTLY WITH TWO SPECIAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE MIDDLE EAST ITEMS NORMALLY DEBATED IN NOVEMBER, NOR DID THEY WISH IT TO COME AT END OF ASSEMBLY. THUS SOME TIME IN MID OR LATE OCTOBER SEEMED MOST APPROPRIATE. (HE DID NOT MENTION LATE OCTOBER ARAB LEAGUE SUMMIT AS BEING A FACTOR.) NON-ARAB DELS WITH WHOM WE HAVE DISCUSSED MATTER (INCLUDING BRITISH AND FRENCH) DO NOT HAVE STRONG OPINIONS ON TIMING, AND CONSIDER THIS A MATTER FOR ARABS TO DECIDE. OUR OWN VIEW IS THAT PRIORITY QUESTION

IS NOT OF FIRST IMPORTANCE. TIMING DOES NOT SERIOUSLY IMPINGE ON OUR POSITION RELATIVE TO OTHER ITEMS SUCH AS CYPRUS AND KHMER. MOREOVER, WE THINK IT IMPORTANT NOT TO ADOPT ADVERSARY POSITION TOWARD ARABS AT OUTSET UNLESS ESSENTIAL; WE WILL NEED ALL OUR CAPITAL LATER IN WORKING FOR A MODERATE RESOLUTION. THIS BEING SAID, IF DEPT CONSIDERS IT IMPORTANT FOR OTHER REASONS THAT PALESTINE DEBATE TAKE PLACE LATE IN SESSION, WE WOULD LIKE TO KNOW IT.

3. ALLOCATION OF CYPRUS ITEM.

ACTING HEAD OF CYPRUS DEL KYPRIANOU TOLD US SEPT 18 THAT HE WOULD DEFINITELY ASK FOR ALLOCATION TO PLENARY. HE REASONED THAT PLENARY ALLOCATION WOULD GIVE CYPRUS GOVT CERTAIN LATITUDE, SINCE IT EASIER TO MOVE AN ITEM FROM PLENARY TO FIRST COMMITTEE THAN VICE VERSA IF TIMING MADE THAT

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 USUN N 03274 190526Z

ADVISEABLE. WE SEE NO OBJECTION TO PLENARY ALLOCATION OF CYPRUS ITEM STRONG ENOUGH TO WARRANT CHALLENGE, NOR DO WE THINK ANY POSSIBILITY EXISTS OF SUSTAINING CHALLENGE. (PARTICIPATION OF VICE PRES DENKTASH, EVEN IF GOC OBJECTS, SEEMS TO US NOT TO RAISE QUITE SAME PRECEDENT PROBLEMS AS PLO PARTICIPATION.) AS IN CASE OF A DIRECT CHALLENGE IN GENERAL COMMITTEE TO ALLOCATION OF PALESTINE ITEM, CHALLENGE TO ALLOCATION OF CYPRUS TO PLENARY WOULD AGAIN MAXIMUM

OF 5-6 SUPPORTING VOTES AND ABSTENTIONS. AS NOTED LONDON 12087, UKUN DOES NOT INTEND VOTE AGAINST PLENARY DISCUSSION, BUT IS RECOMMENDING ABSTENTION IF QUESTION PUT TO VOTE. BECAUSE OF TURKISH DEMARCHE NOTED PARA 5 BELOW, MISSION RECOMMENDS US ALSO ABSTAIN.

4. PRIORITY OF CYPRUS ITEM.

CYPRUS GOVT WILL PROBABLY REQUEST PRIORITY CONSIDERATION, I.E. AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AFTER GENERAL DEBATE. (KYPRIANOU TOLD US EARLY DEBATE WOULD "HAVE CONSTRUCTIVE EFFECT" ON CLERIDES-DENKTASH TALKS.) AS WE HAVE PREVIOUSLY REPORTED, WE WOULD MUCH PREFER TO SEE CYPRUS DEBATE COME LATE IN ASSEMBLY -- IF AT ALL -- SO AS TO GIVE NICOSIA NEGOTIATIONS BEST CHANCE OF SUCCESS. HOWEVER, WE DO NOT THINK PRIORITY CONSIDERATION CAN BE BLOCKED IN GENERAL COMMITTEE IF CYPRUS REQUESTS IT THERE. IN ANY CASE, GENERAL COMMITTEE CAN RECOMMEND, BUT NOT DECIDE, QUESTIONS OF PRIORITY. IN OUR VIEW, A BETTER CHANCE OF SUCCESSFULLY CHALLENGING PRIORITY EXISTS IN PLENARY WHEN QUESTION COMES UP THERE FOR DECISION. IF PRIORITY QUESTION IS PUT TO VOTE IN GENERAL COMMITTEE, RECOMMEND WE ABSTAIN.

5. TURKISH INTENTION TO CHALLENGE. INSCRIPTION OF CYPRUS ITEM.

LATE SEPT 18 TURKISH PERMREP OLCAY CALLED AMB BENNETT TO SAY THAT TURKEY HAD DECIDED TO CHALLENGE IN GENERAL COMMITTEE INSCRIPTION OF CYPRUS ITEM. HE ASKED FOR US SUPPORT OR AT LEAST ABSTENTION. BENNETT TOLD HIM WE HAD INSTRUCTIONS TO VOTE IN FAVOR OF INSCRIPTION IF MATTER PRESSED TO VOTE, LARGELY BECAUSE OF LONG-STANDING US POSITION OF FAVORING INSCRIPTION
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 USUN N 03274 190526Z

OF ITEMS CONSIDERED BY MEMBERS TO BE OF IMPORTANCE TO THEM -- WHATEVER OUR VIEWS ON THEIR SUBSTANCE. BENNETT ADDED THAT US WOULD MAKE HELPFUL EXPLANATION OF VOTE, EMPHASIZING PRIMARY IMPORTANCE WE ATTACHED TO CURRENT NEGOTIATIONS.
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